BRITISH COLUMBIA

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highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

Employment Insurance

- **The number of regular employment insurance (EI) recipients in British Columbia declined 2.5% (seasonally adjusted) between July and August, falling to 67,800.** There were fewer employment insurance recipients in most parts of the country. Nationally, the number of recipients was down 5.4% to 582,870, and New Brunswick (+2.5%), PEI (+1.6%) and Yukon (+0.2%) were the only regions where there were more EI recipients than in July. The largest declines occurred in Saskatchewan (-18.9%) and Manitoba (-14.0%). *Source: Statistics Canada*

Department Store Sales

- **Department store sales in British Columbia and the two territories were 7.7% higher in September than in the same month last year.** Sales were up in all parts of the country, increasing 12.6% nationally. The strongest gains were in Newfoundland and PEI (18.1%) and New Brunswick (15.8%). Sales growth in excess of ten percent was reported in all regions except Manitoba (9.3%) and BC and the north.

  Consumer purchases of clothing account for 30% of department store sales. Other major components include home furnishings and housewares (13%), toiletries, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals (11%) and furniture and appliance sales (7.0%). *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Year-to-date, department store sales in BC and the territories were up 8.2% over the same period of 1996.** The increase was below the national average (10.3%), but higher than in Manitoba (6.8%) and New Brunswick (7.5%). Alberta (12.8%) recorded the strongest growth of any province. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Electric Power

- **Net generation of electricity in British Columbia was down 11.7% in August, relative to the same month last year.** The province's electricity generation totalled 5,806 gigawatt hours (GWh). Electricity generation during the year has been well below the levels reached in 1996, when large amounts of electricity were produced and sold in order to bring reservoirs at dams like the W.A.C Bennet Dam in Northeastern BC down to lower levels. Year-to-date, electricity production in BC was down 11.3% from the first eight months of 1996. Low reservoir levels in BC, Quebec and Ontario contributed to lower electricity production at the national level (43,064 GWh, 2.9% less than in August 1996). Year-to-date, Canadian electricity production was down 0.2%, to 364,530 GWh. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Cellular Telephones

- **One in nine Canadians had a cellular telephone in 1996.** There were 3,420,318 cellular telephone subscribers in Canada at the end of last year, 32.1% more than the year-end figure for 1995 (2,589,780). *Source: Statistics Canada*

Youth Courts

- **In 1995/96 there were 10,137 cases processed in BC youth courts.** This was 1.2% less than in the previous year, and the fourth straight year in which the number of youth

Report **Immigration from APEC economies**

Did you know...?
About 10% of men and 8% of women are left handed

court cases has declined. Nationally, 111,027 cases were heard in youth courts, 1.2% more than in the previous year.

Two-thirds (68%) of the cases heard in BC youth courts resulted in a guilty verdict. Two percent were dismissed or led to a not guilty verdict, while proceedings were stayed in 28% of the cases. Among those found guilty, probation was the most common disposition (59%), followed by open custody (19%) and secure custody (9%).

On an average day in 1995/96, there were 116 young offenders in secure custody in British Columbia, and 191 in open custody (community residential centres, group homes, child care institutions, or other facilities such as forest or wilderness camps). *SC, Catalogue 85-522-XPB*

- **By far the most common charge against young offenders in BC was theft under $5,000, which accounted for 20.5% of the 10,137 cases heard in 1995/96.** Other major categories include offences under the Young Offender's Act (13.8%), break and enter (11.7%) and minor assault (10.0%). Arson (0.5%), impaired driving (0.6%) and escape or being unlawfully at large (0.6%) were the least prevalent offences. Seven out of ten cases heard in youth courts in 1995/96 involved youth between the ages of 15 and 17.

Source: SC, Catalogue 85-522-XPB

Suicides

- **In 1995, British Columbia's suicide rate (number of suicides per 100,000 population) was 11.32.** This was below the national average (13.41) and the fourth-lowest in the country. Newfoundland (7.28) and Ontario (9.80) had the lowest suicide rates in Canada. The highest were in Quebec (19.49), and the north (24.31 in NWT and 29.71 in Yukon).

  The highest incidence of suicide in BC was among the elderly (aged 75 or over), led by 80-to-84-year-olds (20.19). In younger age groups, those between the ages of 25 and 34 were the most likely to commit suicide. There were 426 suicide deaths in BC in 1995.

Source: SC, special tablulations

Firearms

- **The number of firearms acquisition certificates issued in British Columbia has decreased by almost two-thirds since the beginning of the decade.** In the 1990/91 fiscal year, 22,420 firearms acquisition certificates were issued in the province. This year, the total is expected to reach 8,355, up from 5,231 in 1996/97. The increase in the number of certificates issued is the first since 1992/93.

Source: Ministry of Attorney General, Key Indicator Report

Prices

- **Canada's industrial product price index (IPPI) fell 0.2% to 119.8 (1992=100) in September, as the 12-month change in industrial prices dropped to 0.5%.** The most significant industrial price change was a drop in the overall price for gasoline and fuel oil. Other changes of note were decreases in the prices of certain non-ferrous metals and increases in the prices of products made from pulp.

  The September release marked the first in which rebased indexes were used. In addition to the change in the base year, the underlying weights used in the IPPI series now reflect the 1992 manufacturing production structure.

Source: Statistics Canada

The Nation

- **Canada's economy stalled in August, as real GDP at factor cost (seasonally adjusted) was unchanged from the previous month.** August's flat performance follows strong gains (0.8%) in the previous month. GDP in the goods-producing sector declined 0.3%, reflecting widespread weakness. Construction (0.8%) was the only goods industry where GDP increased in August. In the service sector, GDP inched ahead 0.1% after growing 0.6% in the previous month. Communications (0.9%) and community, business and personal services (0.3%) were the only industries that recorded any significant gains over the previous month.

Source: Statistics Canada

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For data originating from Statistics Canada: data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the publication name or catalogue number.

Infoline Report:

October 31, 1997

Immigration from APEC Members

Originally published in First Half '97 issue of *Immigration Highlights*, a quarterly available by subscription, $30 + GST

APEC, Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, was created in 1989 by a group of 18 Asian Pacific economies, including Canada, to collectively promote trade, investment and economic as well as technological cooperation. The other APEC members include:

- Australia
- Indonesia
- Japan
- Papua New Guinea
- Mexico
- Chile
- Republic of Philippines
- USA
- New Zealand
- Malaysia
- Thailand
- Chinese Taipei
- Hong Kong, China
- People's Republic of China
- Republic of Korea
- Singapore
- Brunei Darussalam

All APEC members are British Columbia's trading partners. In 1996, the province's total export to all other APEC members excluding Canada was more than $23 billion. It is also estimated that the overall APEC economy accounted for approximately 60 per cent of total output in the world and half of global merchandise trade. APEC also includes most of the fastest growing economies in the world. British Columbia, located at the Pacific Rim, is an important province with respect to Canada's relations with the other APEC members. B.C. has served as a hub for trade between Canada and many of the APEC members.

It is believed that trade and immigration have a positive influence on each other. Trading and business activities between Canada and other APEC members increase the exposure of B.C. to other APEC members and hence tend to promote immigration to the province. B.C. has been receiving immigrants from each of the APEC members although the magnitude of inflow varies considerably among different members. Over the last few years, People's Republic of China, Chinese Taipei, Republic of Philippines, Republic of Korea, Hong Kong and U.S.A. have consistently been among the top ten sources of immigrants to the province.

In 1996, B.C. received a total of 32,415 immigrants from all APEC members, representing almost two-thirds of all immigrants landed in the province during the year. Compared to other provinces, B.C. is also the favored destination for immigrants from APEC members. In 1996, B.C.'s share of total Canadian immigrants from all sources was 23 per cent but the province attracted a much higher share (37 per cent) of immigrants from the APEC members.

While collectively APEC is an important source of immigrants to the province, the level and characteristics of immigrants from individual APEC members may vary significantly. Over the last ten years, the six APEC members of

Immigrants to British Columbia From APEC Members

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	Ten Year Total
Hong Kong, China	3,520	5,185	4,847	7,652	6,300	10,049	11,419	16,100	11,830	11,921	88,823
Chinese Taipei	410	887	1,391	1,669	2,617	4,131	5,975	4,745	5,340	9,284	36,449
Republic of Philippines	1,228	1,531	1,883	1,992	1,950	2,460	3,812	3,703	3,341	2,988	24,888
People's Republic of 'China	734	758	1,141	1,420	3,544	2,231	2,190	2,976	3,267	4,227	22,488
U.S.A.	1,515	1,280	1,305	1,255	1,345	1,537	1,734	1,331	1,195	1,196	13,693
Republic of Korea	456	558	536	443	450	679	896	889	1,137	999	7,043
Singapore	156	443	657	424	331	239	282	190	219	247	3,188
Malaysia	189	535	609	547	317	336	240	189	111	85	3,158
Japan	135	119	231	199	226	265	464	498	437	543	3,117
Australia	162	159	211	238	253	299	373	314	312	306	2,627
Mexico	124	113	124	171	163	137	162	106	180	243	1,523
Brunei Darussalam	116	301	274	208	178	130	73	53	23	8	1,364
New Zealand	87	81	128	119	98	136	133	72	83	101	1,038
Indonesia	71	94	73	65	119	91	96	104	99	142	954
Thailand	29	48	51	53	79	77	88	82	94	86	687
Chile	66	40	41	40	57	60	48	31	21	34	438
Papua New Guinea	2	1	-	7	1	-	-	1	-	5	17
Total	9,000	12,133	13,502	16,502	18,028	22,857	27,985	31,384	27,689	32,415	211,495

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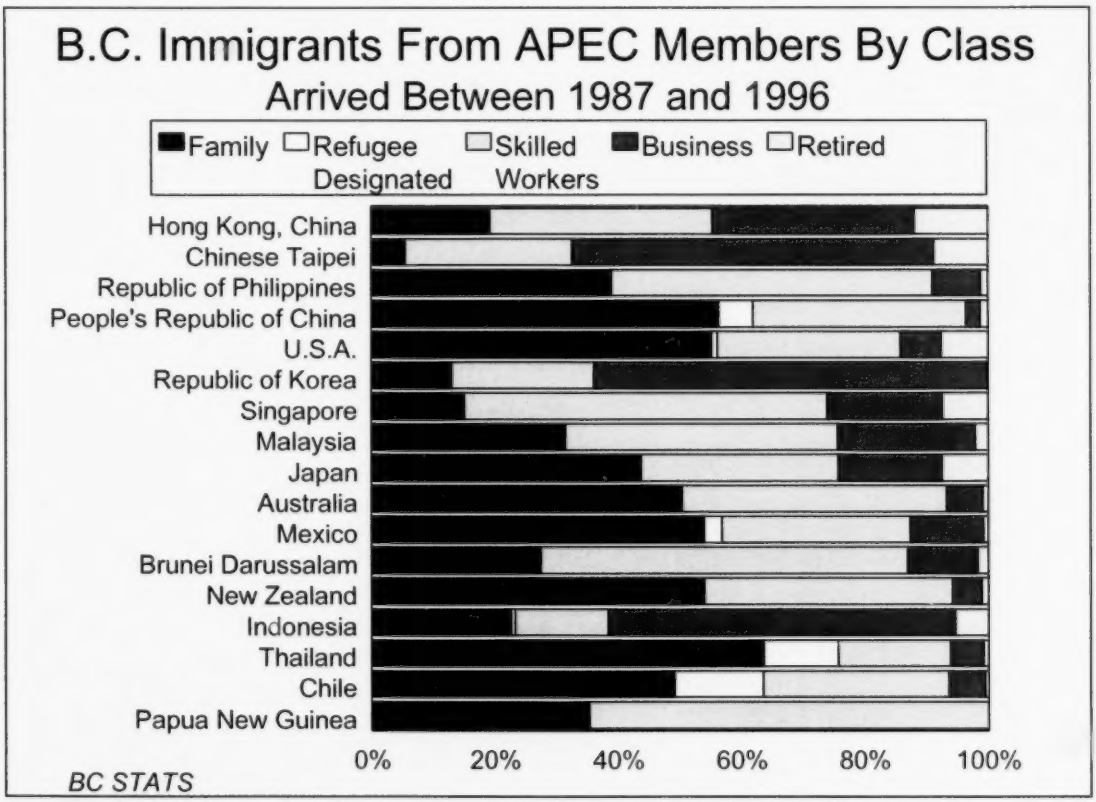
People's Republic of China, Chinese Taipei, Republic of Philippines, Republic of Korea, Hong Kong and U.S.A. accounted for 94 per cent of all immigrants from the APEC group. In 1996, the number of immigrants to B.C. from various APEC members ranged from 5 persons from Papua New Guinea to 11,921 persons from Hong Kong, While Japan, after U.S.A., has been the most important country for export from B.C., the province only attracts a few hundred Japanese immigrants each year.

Comparing immigrants from APEC members by immigration class also shows significant variations. Over the last ten years, a relatively higher proportion of immigrants from Chinese Taipei, Republic of Korea, Indonesia and Hong Kong came under the Business Immigration Program which includes the Entrepreneur, Investor and Self-employed classes. On the other hand, Family Class represented more than half of the immigrants from the People's Republic of China, U.S.A., Mexico, New Zealand, and Thailand. The skilled worker immigrants accounted for a higher proportion of immigrants who came from Republic of Philippines, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia and Papua New Guinea. The Retired Class of immigrants were mainly from Hong Kong, Chinese Taipei, U.S.A., Indonesia and Singapore.

While it may not be completely appropriate to consider APEC as a collective group when analyzing and promoting immigration from its members due to the diversity in the level and characteristics of its immigrants, it is nevertheless important to note that increased cooperation and trade between the APEC members may eventually stimulate more immigrants to B.C. and Canada in the future.



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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Jul 1/97	% change on year ago
BC	3,933.3	2.0
Canada	30,286.6	1.1
GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT		% change
(BC - at market prices - $ millions)	1996	on year ago
Current Dollars	103,631	1.7
Constant (1986) Dollars	74,001	1.0
TRADE ($ millions)		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) Aug	2,864	-1.5
Merchandise Exports (raw) Aug	2,047	-4.8
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) Aug	2,756	5.9
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		% change
(all items - 1986=100)	Sep '97	on year ago
BC	139.9	0.9
Canada	138.1	1.6
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change
(seasonally adjusted)	Sep '97	on year ago
Labour Force - BC	2,032	2.4
Employed - BC	1,851	2.9
Unemployed - BC	181	-2.2
		Sep '96
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	8.9	9.3
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	9.0	10.0
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Oct 29/97	Oct 30/96
Prime Business Rate	5.25	5.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	5.65	5.35
- 5 year	6.70	7.20
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Oct 29/97	Oct 30/96
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.4025	1.3411
US $ *(reciprocal of above rate)*	0.7130	0.7457
AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS		% change
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Aug '97	on year ago
BC	619.00	0.9
Canada	598.58	1.5

SOURCES:
Gross Domestic Product: Statistics Canada, revised by BC STATS
Population, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Earnings: Statistics Canada
Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

Released this week by BC STATS

- Exports, July 1997
- Earnings and Employment Trends, July 1997
- Business Indicators, October 1997
- Current Statistics, October 1997

Next week

- Tourism Room Revenue, July 1997

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